



## E-BULLETIN

### **USAID support leads to the compensation of 157,000 victims in 2012**

Thanks to USAID Public Policy Program support, the Victims' Unit reported important achievements in its first year of operation. Over the course of 2012, 157,000 victims received financial compensation for a total of \$518M. In addition, 51,565 individual and 6 collective reparations plans were developed. Furthermore, the Victims' Unit outperformed all Social Inclusion Sector entities by executing 92.2% of its investment budget (approximately US \$574M). These results are a key contribution to the building of citizen trust in the GOC's comprehensive assistance and reparations process, and a crucial step towards restoring the rights of 1 million victims over the next 10 years.

Recently, the Director of the Victims' Unit, Paula Gaviria, stated that the USAID Public Policy Program's support "has been decisive not only in defining the Public Policy for Comprehensive Victims' Reparations, but also in the design and operation of the institutional framework required to turn goals into results."

To help victims' compensation become a reality, the USAID Public Policy Program provided technical assistance for the successful establishment and operation of the Victims' Unit. The Program's experts focused their efforts on the design and implementation of the Unit's operating mechanisms and procedures, staff selection, inter-institutional coordination mechanisms, communications strategy, the design of regional assistance centers, and the development of the Unit's budget execution plan.

Even though victims are now able to access financial compensation, many challenges remain. The USAID Public Policy Program will continue supporting the Victims' Unit to strengthen its internal operational capacity as coordinator of the National System for Victims' Assistance and Reparations (SNARIV). The Program will also provide assistance to the Unit's 20 Territorial Directorates in the design of their 2013 action plans to ensure that they are aligned with institutional priorities, and, to help to make services provided are flexible enough to meet different victims' needs.

## Historic milestone for victims' reparations: First land restitution award



President Santos delivered land titles to Mampujan's Victims

Fuente: [www.elheraldo.com.co](http://www.elheraldo.com.co)

December 19, 2012 became a historic date for Colombia, the Land Restitution Unit (LRU) and land restitution judges. In Mampuján (Bolívar), President Juan Manuel Santos personally delivered land titles to 31 families who were displaced in 2000 by a paramilitary group. The first land restitution process under the Victims' Law was thus completed, and approximately 65 hectares of land were returned to their rightful owners.

Overall, the LRU reported significant results for 2012; it registered 28,911 applications (211% of the GOC's goal for 2012) in the Abandoned and Seized Land Registry, the starting point for carrying out the land restitution process. Over the course of last year, the Public Policy Program focused on supporting GOC efforts to make land restitution possible. To meet this goal, the Program provided technical assistance to the LRU to design its organizational structure and internal procedures. To build internal capacity, the Program supported the establishment of LRU job descriptions, as well as the successful implementation of a personnel selection process. In addition, the Program supported LRU staff in developing a strategic action plan to be implemented over the next two years (remaining time in Santos' term) to meet the GOC's target of restituting 160,000 land plots.

However, land restitution in Mampuján is just the first step. Within the framework of the Victims' Law, the LRU must address 360,000 cases of land seizure over the next 10 years. The USAID Public Policy Program now faces the challenge of providing the LRU with the tools necessary to process large volumes of restitution claims. In particular, the Program will produce new methods for prioritizing areas for land restitution and instruments for collecting and processing information regarding property rights.